ADVENTURES OF AN ENTHUSIAST

Ernest Everett Day

ADVENTURES

OF

An Enthusiast

BY

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THE TRI-STATE PUBLISHING CO.
Excelsior, Minnesota
1907

TO

MY WIFE

ADVENTURES OF AN ENTHUSIAST

CHAPTER ONE

The Coming of Don Quixote

Among the passengers who reached the Canal street depot, Chicago, one November evening in 18—, was a modern Don Quixote. In calling him a modern Don Quixote, there is no intention to prejudice the reader at the very beginning of this story, but rather to state the opinion which many of his relatives and friends had of his trip to Chicago and his intentions after arriving.

It may be of interest to know that he had come from one of the eastern states, but that fact had little or nothing to do with his adventures.

It was his first experience in a large city, and his impression as he stood in the door way of

the depot and looked out on Canal street was one of fear and bewilderment. He had never heard such a pandemonium. The edge of the sidewalk was lined with hotel runners and cabmen, each apparently trying to outshout the other. A tall red haired runner with a stubby red moustache, who stood by a pillar, was the first to see the state of mind of the young man in the doorway and, pointing his finger at him, raised his raucous voice several degrees louder, even above the noise of the wagons, busses and cabs on the street, and the cries of the other runners, and shouted:

"I am the man you are looking for young fellow! Come with me! I'll take you to the best hotel in the city."

It must be confessed that the young man standing there with the crowd hurrying past him in and out of the depot and gazing about, half dazed by the unfamiliar sights and sounds, looked to be a country greenhorn indeed. His soft felt hat though new was evidently a size or more too large for him and came down not far from

his ears, and while at the same time it was set too far back on his head. On his left arm he carried an overcoat that a close observer, in the glare of the lights, would have seen had been carefully placed so as to show the lining, which made a more presentable appearance than the outside of the coat, which bare evidence of more than one winter's wear. In his right hand he carried an oil cloth valise, also much the worse for wear. His collar was of paper, although he had two linen ones in his valise, while his black suit had the glaze which comes from much wear and showed by the cut and hang the cheap ready-made of the period.

The shoes and the tie were the only evidence that the young man was not quite as much of a green-horn as he at first appeared. The shoes were custom made and fit like a glove. They had cost him six dollars which he had earned by the sweat of his brow in the harvest field. It was true that they were in need of blacking, but that he could soon remedy when he got by himself as he carried both brush and

blacking in the oil cloth valise. At first he did not realize that the red haired runner was pointing and shouting at him, and made no reply. Then he saw that he was attracting the attention of the crowd, and so came to a decision that he would follow the crowd, which was hurrying in the direction of what he afterwards learned was Madison Street.

The red haired runner seeing his green-horn about to escape him, looked quickly to see if any policeman was in sight, then sprang upon the pavement, seized the young man's arm with one hand, the handle of the oil cloth valise with the other and shouted almost in his ear, "Come with me, I tell you!"

The newcomer was not prepared for such tactics, and had given up his valise, from surprise, when he turned in a flash from the runner, jerked his valise away and giving the bold fellow a flash from his eyes, that showed they could flash when need be, said, "What's the matter with you? I know where I am going and it is not with you. Get back where you belong, or I'll re-

port you."

The runner was surprised in his turn and, seeing the station policeman coming down the stairs from the waiting room, growled out something which the young man took for an oath and sprang back into his place by the iron pillar.

The young man saw the policeman the next instant and had half a mind to bring charges against the runner, but contented himself with giving him another look, and asking the policeman the nearest route to the Northwestern depot.

The officer gave the directions and advised that he take a bus, which would cost only a half dollar, and would land him safely at his destination. The young man thanked him, but felt certain that he could find his way and preferred to walk. The policeman thought, as he looked him over, "I guess your'e one of the cheap kind," and the thought showed so plainly in his face that the young man felt hurt. "Yes," he said to himself, as he walked toward Madison Street, "I am a cheap fellow all right. I have just five dollars

to my name, but I'm trusting the Lord to give me some more." None the less his feelings were hurt, and the pain did not cease until he had reached the river, found the draw bridge open and was so interested in the novel sight of a large vessel passing through the draw that he forgot for the moment that he was one of the cheap kind with only five dollars in his pocket.

He was one of the first to step upon the bridge as it swung back into place after the passage of the steamer, and stopped half way across to look north, down the river and then at the dark water below. He had read and heard so much about the Chicago river of that day that he was disappointed not to be able to see the dirt and grease for which the river was so notorious. He could not help thinking that any one must be miserable indeed to deliberately choose such a grave.

Then he rememebred that he had eaten nothing but a piece of balogna since morning, and also that he had forgotten to inquire the time when his train left the Northwestern depot for the

suburb where his friend lived. It would never do, he thought, to put his friend's wife to the trouble of getting him a late dinner. He must dine in the city if the very humble meal which he could afford could be called dining.

By inquiring of another policeman whom he met, he found his way to a restaurant on Franklin street, and waited impatiently for his order of a small steak. He had eaten but little when he realized that the meat was evidently tainted, and could eat no more. Again he was reminded that he was one of the cheap kind and in trying to save money he had entered a restaurant which served cheap meats. He made no protest, feeling that it was worse than useless, paid his check and hurried on to the station only to find that the last train had gone for his friend's, five minutes before.

There was but one thing to do, stay in the city over night. He had seen the lights of what seemed to him quite a respectable looking hotel, a short distance north, on Wells street, entered it secured a room, paid for it and was shown at

once to his room.

As the bell boy closed the door of the small bedroom, Allan turned the key, placed a chair against the door, a precaution which he had been advised to take when in the city and then threw himself on his knees by the bed and looking up with folded hands prayed.

"Now, Lord, here I am," he whispered, "I've come to Chicago because I thought you wanted me to; you know that it isn't my plan. I wanted very much to go my own way, but it seemed to me that you wanted me to come and here I am. I have just four dollars and sixty cents left and if you want me to stay here, show me, please, how to make some more. If you don't show me that then show me, Lord, what you do want me to do, and I'll do it the best I can if you'll help me.

For over half an hour he continued to whisper to an unseen presence, and then, feeling utterly weary from his long journey, went to bed but not to sleep. The noise of trains and switch engines so near by, the horse cars, and vehicles on the street under his window, and the sound of

people passing his door every few moments were all too strange and unusual to permit him to sleep even if the efforts of his distressed stomach to digest or throw off the bad meat of his dinner, to say nothing of his own thoughts, would have permitted.

Over and over his mind returned to what his old friend, Doctor Barclay, had said: "And so you would be a modern Don Quixote, would you? He fought windmills but you are going to chase chimaeras." Also the last thing the Doctor had said before he bade him good-bye:

"Allan, do you want to know my candid opinion of what you are going to do. Well, I think you are the biggest fool for your size that I know. There are plenty of young fellows who are not good for anything else, but certainly you have some brains and you've in you the making of a good general practitioner. Besides I offer you a chance that most any other young man would jump at, and you refuse it all for the sake of a notion."

Allan remembered how hard the old man had

tried to speak lightly, as if it were rather a joke, but the earnestness of his tones belied the lightness of his manner. Yes, the Doctor had been very kind to him. He had offered to lend him the money to go through medical school and, after his graduation, a partnership. "Doctors Barclay & Fairly, Physicians and Surgeons," would have looked well on a sign in front of that office in the city. What if the old Doctor was right. He certainly was a man of good judgment in both his profession and as a business man. Was it not altogether probable that his judgment was sound in this case also. "The biggest fool I know," he had repeated, and perhaps after all, he was right.

It certainly would have been nice to know just where the needed money was to come from to buy text books, and pay other expenses. He would not have needed to turn the lining of his overcoat out in order to hide the outside. He would not have needed to wear a ready made suit glossy with use. And then, to step at once into a share of a practice of ten thousand a

year, that was certainly worth considering. Many young doctors waited years before they became self supporting. And this certainty he had refused for an uncertainty, no, not an uncertainty but a certainty. Instead of a fat pocket book he had at that moment just four dollars and ten cents. And that was only a foretaste of what he might expect all the rest of his life. It had been one of his fondest ambitions to have a home of his own, and a competence for old age, and, now, he could hope to have neither. Certainly it did look as if he were a fool, even though he could not claim to be the biggest fool of the old Doctor's acquaintance. After all, had the Doctor said anything but what the vast majority of people would call the soundest common sense. It was Franklin was it not, who said, "The Lord helps those who help themselves." Could there be such a thing as special providence or was the whole world, and the stars about, subject to the same law of grab and get and keep. Was there no need and no place for the altruist in this world of business and common sense?

But where would the old world be morally to-day, he questioned, if there had not been men who in all walks of life had followed in the footsteps of the supreme altruist and counted not their lives dear unto them for the sake of truth and right. He was taking chances, he knew; he would certainly lose much that he held dear, but he stood a chance, he was certain, to gain something so much better and greater, that he was willing to take the risk.

It was nearly two o'clock before the roar of the street and the sound of the footsteps in the hall permitted him to sleep and then he was wakened before daylight in the morning by the return of the noises. As sleep was no longer possible he arose, gave thanks that his life had been spared through the night, and prepared to take the first train to his friend's home. As he put on his hat by the light of the gas he saw for the first time something of how much too large his hat seemed to be. "My!" he said aloud, "do I look like that!" What was he thinking of to buy a hat so much too large? He remembered that he

had been so fearful that he'd miss the train for Chicago that he had paid too little attention to the fit of his new hat. Several strips from the newspaper in the valise improved matters somewhat, but he could see that the hat was by no means becoming to him. Was he not making good Doctor Barclay's words, "The biggest fool."

CHAPTER TWO

The School of the Prophets

Before noon of that day, Allan Fairly was installed as a member of the Junior class, of the Great Western Theological Seminary. He had frankly told Professor Woodruff that he had only a few dollars left, and would be compelled to work his way. He felt, he said, that if the Lord really wished him to take the course, He would show him how to get along. If not, he would consider it evidence that he had been mistaken, and return to the farm and to his country school teaching.

The Professor was very kind, evidently making allowance for Allan's youth and inexperience, and assured him that a way would no doubt be found if he proved himself worthy. A room

would be given him in one of the dormitories, and doubtless, some one of the students would help him find a good boarding house. Very probably, something would be found for him to do so that he could earn his way.

The boarding house was found, the first week's board paid in advance, the necessary text books purchased, and Allan had just thirty cents remaining. But he did not worry. He said to himself that he would be only too glad, in one sense, to be convinced that his call to the seminary was all a mistake, and that his conscience would permit him to write Doctor Barclay for the necessary funds, enter some medical school in the city and expect smooth sailing.

He found the atmosphere of the school very delightful. The morning prayer meetings, the daily chapel exercises, the opening of each lecture or recitation with prayer, were all so new and strange, that it seemed to him at first like a foretaste of heaven.

It was only after some months, that he realized that human nature was still human nature,

even in a school of the prophets. One evening during that first week his room mate, a senior, told him of the latest joke on Jones, a middler. Jones was greatly interested in a young lady several blocks away from the school, and spent so much time there that his lessons for the next day suffered in consequence. A night or two before, he had been unusually late, even for Jones, and the lecture on church history received scant attention. It was Jones' luck, so Watkins said, to be called upon to recite the next day when he was least prepared.

"Mr. Jones!" said the Professor of Ecclesiastical history looking down his list.

Mr. Jones rose to his feet, and tried to concentrate his sleepy faculties.

"Would you give us, Mr. Jones please, St. Paul's second missionary journey?"

Mr. Jones was glad, for the moment. He remembered something about that at least, and started with much assurance.

"Paul and his companion, Silas, passed through Cilicia, from Cilicia they went to—

Derbe—" but Mr. Jones' confidence in his memory was beginning to fail. He hesitated a moment searching in his memory for the lost name.

"And then—" said Mr. Jones and again hesitated.

The Professor was kind and asked by way of encouragement, "Well Mr. Jones, where did they go then?"

But that was just the difficulty. Mr. Jones could not tell where they had gone and so contented himself with saying:

"And then—and then—."

"Well, Mr. Jones, where did they go then?"

"And then,—and then—" continued Mr. Jones in desperation—"they journeyed on!" The class roared with laughter and the Professor, who enjoyed a joke as much as any of the students, repressed a smile that threatened to broaden into a laugh and said:

"That will do for the present, Mr. Jones." Mr. Jones sat down hastily wiping his forehead. He had not noticed before that the lecture room was so warm.

The story was soon all over the school and Mr. Jones' account of Paul's second missionary journey was considered the best joke of the year. It was not without its touch of tragedy, however, for sometime the next week it was suddenly noticed that Mr. Jones' name was not called in class, and that his room was vacant. Some claimed to have good reason for thinking that Mr. Jones' case had come up before the faculty, and he was advised that it was hardly worth his while to remain in school and that therefore he had followed the example of the great apostle and—"journeyed on."

Toward the latter part of that first week Allan began to think that he also would need to journey on for lack of funds to pay his board and laundry. Nothing had as yet given any promise of means of support. He told his troubles to Professor Woodruff, who encouraged him to hold on and something would turn up, he was certain.

It was Sunday afternoon that something did turn up, and so unexpectedly, that Allan regarded it as a special providence in his behalf. As

he was coming down the dormitory stairs, he met a man in middle life who stopped him with the question:

"Have you ever preached any?"

"Never even tried," said Allan.

"Would you like to try tonight? I am the Superintendent of the Missionary Society, and I want a man to preach for me tonight at a mission straight south along this street. If you'll go, I'll give you five dollars."

Allan promised to do his best, and after receiving explicit directions, returned to his room to have his room mate tell him what to do and say. Watkins laughed at him, told him to make his own sermon, tell his experience, if necessary, and put up a bold front.

With only ten cents in his pocket, Allan decided that he would be compelled to walk one way at least. It would be better to take the street cars coming home, and so he walked the five miles directly south from the seminary. He started early, without his supper, and after many inquiries found the little mission room

a half hour before the time for services.

He had not realized how tired and hungry he was, until he rose before the congregation, which almost filled the room, and tried to lead the service. He was so nervous and frightened as he arose to preach that it seemed to him the room was stifling. He stopped, while the janitor let down one of the windows near by, but that did not solve the difficulty and, after what seemed to him an hour or an hour and a half, he closed, well pleased to find a stopping place. He had put up as bold a front as he could, walked the platform back and forth, both sawed and clawed the air , as he told Watkins afterward, but all to no purpose. His subject was "One Thing I Know," but he seriously questioned, on his way home, whether he knew even that or, at least, had convinced the congregation of workingmen, their wives and children, of that fact.

They evidently took the will for the deed, for they invited him to return the next Sunday evening, which Watkins assured him, was certainly very kind of them. The next day the Superin-

tendent came and paid him the five dollars, and so provision was made for the next week's board and laundry, and also a little for incidental expenses.

For several weeks he supplied the little mission church, and then they apparently had enough of him, and he was not invited to return. This surprised and hurt him, but he compelled himself to admit that they doubtless had good reason, as they could get someone who could speak much better. The five dollars each week had kept the pot boiling, he told Watkins, and each one was a special providence.

The overcoat, however, was getting still shabbier and the weather so cold that he was compelled to wear it even though he imagined every man and woman he met on the street stared at him and took him for a tramp. Again he went to Prof. Woodruff and again there was a remarkable coincidence. The very day before, the Professor had received an inquiry from a young man who wished a tutor for a few weeks in preparation for a teachers' examination. Had Mr. Fair-

ly ever studied the subject? He had and was confident he could teach it for a few weeks at least. Three lessons a week, at a dollar a lesson, was enough to pay his board, but there was still the laundry and incidentals to say nothing of the overcoat.

This difficulty was solved by a benevolent gentleman giving a certain amount of money, for the gathering of statistics of the religious condition of a certain district in the city. Allan was chosen as one of the workers, and, to his surprise, the benevolent gentleman paid for the work, forty dollars, in advance.

And so the overcoat was provided for, and a substantial balance for the future. Another coincidence, do you say? Very possibly, but to Allan it was another special providence.

It would doubtless be both proper and fitting to be able to say that Allan showed remarkable qualities as a student, but the facts will not permit such a flight of the imagination. Watkins said he was a "poor" student, and, said it with a grin, but, aside from the fact that he was poor in

purse the jibe was not entirely just. His mind had never been trained, and, though gifted with a retentive memory, he was lacking in the steady, plodding application which characterizes the scholar. At times, he surprised his professors by the excellence of his recitations, and again, by the very opposite qualities. He was thus a poor student in more than one sense.

And yet, he learned a great deal more than he or anyone else realized at the time, a great deal that was not in the books. The daily contact with faculty and students was to him a revelation of what men could know and be. Among them all, no single man influenced him more for good than Charlie Blythe, a classmate, who was always cheery and helpful with a kind word, and a smile for even such a "poor" student as Allan. His prayers in the morning prayer-meeting, his talks in the various meetings of the class, his wholesome laugh, his sweet spirit, were with Allan, and others also, a refined and abiding influence for good.

One day Allan learned he was no exception to

the rule that human nature was still human nature, even in a theological seminary. It came about in this way.

Jake Young, one of the upper class men, was fond of what he called fun. His idea of fun consisted in knocking off a fellow student's hat, or striking him on the arm or chest, or pinching him as they passed in the hall ways. He seemed to think Allan an excellent subject for such attentions, and carried the matter so far that Allan was quite annoyed and half disposed to lose his temper over the matter. He talked with Watkins about it, asking whether he should request Jake to stop it.

"Not much, Fairly," said Watkins, "Jake don't mean any harm, but you take that tack and he'll be ten times worse for he'll think you are afraid of him. I'll tell you what; the next time he takes your biceps for a punching bag, haul off and hit back! Don't lose your temper, don't say a word, but try your triceps on him, and see how he likes his own kind of fun."

"O, I couldn't do that, Watkins," said Allan

much surprised at such advice, "It would be a disgrace for men in the seminary to get into a fight."

"No fight at all, Fairly, just an exchange of pleasantries. Jake has fun with you, and you have fun with Jake. A mere exchange of pleasantires, that's all."

Allan was not satisfied with that statement of the matter, and decided that he would have to go further for advice or bear with Jake's horse play a little longer.

It happened, that very evening, as he and Watkins went to dinner that they met Jake in the lower hall just returning from his dinner, and more than usually full of play. The weather was quite cold, and Allan had on his overcoat and mittens.

"Hello, Fairly!" said Jake, as they met in the hall, "How are you tonight?" at the same time landing a blow on the chest. Allan, to his own great surprise, made no reply, but returned the blow with interest, while Watkins grinned.

"Oho, that's your game is it?" said Jake danc-

ing around, and sparring for an opening.

Allan made no reply, for he now realized that his temper was almost gone, but after they had exchanged a slight blow or two caught Jake off his guard, rushed in and landed on Jake's side in a way that sent that worthy against the wall before he could recover himself, while Watkin's grin was now a laugh.

"O, you will, will you!" said Jake, recovering himself and again sparring for an opening. He still did not realize that Allan was hitting rather seriously, but was in great good humor. Allan was now thoroughly angry and resolved that he would give Jake enough of his own medicine for once, and, when another opportunity came, threw his whole weight into a blow that sent Jake reeling against the stair way at the end of the hall.

The fun was all over. Jake picked himself up without a word and ascended the stairs while Watkins and Allan continued on their way, Watkins laughing, while Allan was still too angry to realize what he had done or to repent of his

anger. Then came a revulsion of feeling.

"I am ashamed of myself, Wat," he said. "It was a disgraceful thing. Why I was fighting mad, and was only sorry I could not hit him with my bare fist. The idea of two men in the theological seminary to say nothing about two Christian men, engaging in such a disgraceful affair. I will apologize to Brother Young when I get back from dinner."

"Don't you do it Fairly! don't you do it," said Watkins earnestly "or you'll have to do the thing all over again. I tell you that is the only kind of a hint that Jake really understands. You'll find that he will not be so free with his hands after this."

It was only after considerable argument that Allan could be pursuaded to let the matter rest, for a while, at least,but his conscience was uneasy on the subect for several days, until he was convinced that Jake harbored no ill feeling and had indeed learned to modify his idea of fun.

The lesson was a revelation to Allan of the possibilities of his own heart, and it was a lesson

that he never forgot. He never doubted, from that day, the real existance of the old Adam in his nature, and while he and Jake never became fast friends, they at least treated each other with Christian courtesy.

CHAPTER THREE.

The Soap Box Pulpit

A little church had been organized at Yellow Springs, some twenty miles out from the city, a church of eight members, six women and two men. The missionary society was looking for a man to supply it on Sundays, Watkins said, but as the pay was small and the conditions hard no one had, as yet, applied for the position.

"I wonder if I could fill the bill," said Allan.

"O, I guess they are in about the same fix as the old maid praying for a husband. It's a case of 'anybody Lord.'"

Allan applied and as there was no one else, the Superintendent was glad to send him. So the next Saturday afternoon found him getting off the train at the village of Yellow Springs. He was taken to the Worthington farm near the village and soon found that his appetite for farm cooking had not lost its edge. Mrs. Worthington and her two daughters were famous cooks, and Allan had many opportunities of demonstrating that their fame rested upon a foundation of fact.

The Yellow Springs church held its meetings in a hall over a general store. The hall was used for dances, and other social gatherings, during the week, and for church on Sundays. Several of the window panes had been broken out in part or in whole, so that there was no lack of ventilation and, if that were not enough, there was no door leading from the outside stairway to the hall, excepting at the foot of the stairway, and though the stairway was covered, the draughts from the door as well, as from the windows gave the very small congregation a continual reminder of the state of the weather outside. Less than a dozen chairs, two or three old benches made up the seats of the hall which deficiency was supplied by placing boards upon the chairs, when curiosity or other reasons added to the size of the congregation. The stove was old and asthmatic and although it did not wheeze, it certainly had hard work to breathe, and often refused to do so, excepting when the wind was in a particular direction and the weather conditions were otherwise favorable. For that reason, if

no other, the room was often partially if not entirely filled with smoke and seldom for the first week, or so, did those in attendance fail to get-a cool reception. A number of times Allan preached with his overcoat on, thrusting his hands into his overcoat pockets every few moments to keep them warm, while the little congregation got as near the stove as they could, and kept shawls, overcoats and wraps tight around them. There was no choir, excepting as the congregation sang and Miss Worthington played the baby organ. A soap box, placed on top of a small and rickety stand, formed the pulpit, and Allan soon found that while a blow upon the top of the pulpit, helped as emphasis, yet he was always in imminent danger of piling the soap box pulpit in a heap on the floor.

Here, certainly, was need for all of the courage and enthusiasm in Allan's nature, and the little church soon showed that they too were not lacking in that respect. Mr. Worthington, although not a member of the church proved himself a host. An old door was found on the farm

and fitted at the head of the stairway, broken window panes were repaired or replaced by new ones, and several valiant attempts were made to cure the stove of its bad habits, but these, alas, were in vain. The landlord all the while refusing to make any repairs. Why should he, he reasoned; his was the only hall in the town. It was plainly a case of take it or leave it.

And yet, in spite of all these disadvantages, the little church and the preacher with his soap box pulpit, were full of hope and courage. The small congregation became larger, even though it never filled the hall excepting on the rarest occasions. And so they resolved to save money to build a little church, and the first social function to aid in that was an oyster supper. It was too bad that they scorched the oyster stew, they had had little experience in cooking oysters, but the cakes and pies made up for it, and Mrs. Worthington's sponge cake, with chocolate frosting, was in such great demand that the supply, generous as it had been, was soon exhausted. Ten dollars was cleared after all ex-

penses, and this small nest egg was laid away for the new church building. New members were added one by one, and soon there were as many as fifteen enrolled.

But, as winter passed and spring approached a dark cloud arose in the horizon of the soap box pulpit. Over and over, Allan was told that it would be impossible to have church during the summer months, and over and over the reason given was on account of the great and notorious Yellow Springs picnic grounds, less than a mile from the hall.

Every Sunday during the warm weather, he was told, a picnic was held there under the management of one of Chicago's leading politicians and business men. About midnight, each Saturday night, hundreds of vehicles of various kinds, express wagons, coal wagons, anything available started to make the 18 mile drive from the city to Yellow Springs. This overflow consisted of the scum of Chicago's worst district. Drunkards, thieves, prostitutes flocked to Yellow Springs either in vehicles or the long excursion

trains on the railroad that ran close by the grounds. The wagons and other vehicles reached the neighborhood of the Springs about daylight on Sunday morning, and began a reign of lawlessness, the story of which filled Allan's unsophisticated mind with astonishment, and, let us add, with righteous indignation.

These unwelcome visitors raided the farms along their way, robbed the orchards and, not content with that, broke great limbs off the trees, chased or shot the chickens in the barn yards, not hesitating to carry off good sized pigs from the pen, and, if the farmer dared to protest, threatened him with firearms or deluged him with the vilest abuse. When they reached the picnic grounds, as they did by the thousands, then all law and order was forgotten, and the lowest and most disgusting forms of drunkenness and debauchery reigned supreme. No decent or respectable men or women ventured on the road on Sundays and the majority of the farmers guarded homes and stock with shot guns.

"Why do you submit to it?" said Allan in as-

tonishment, and was told that they did not dare do anything else. The owner of the grounds was a prominent politician and back of him were the brewers and distillers of the great city with both money and power enough to crush anyone who dared to make an effective protest.

"But why are the brewers and liquor dealers so interested?" Allan asked in his ignorance.

"Why don't you see, Mr. Fairly, they sell their beer and whiskey by the carload, every Sunday, say nothing of what they sell during the week."

"Well," said Allan with a sigh, "I see no other way but we must give them a fight." "It would be madness," said Mr. Worthington, kindly but firmly. "They'd crush us as you would an egg shell. They have both parties under their thumb, and all kinds of money, while we are only a little handful, without money or influence."

"And yet we're in the right, my brother," said Allan, his courage rising. "We have law and order on our side; we have the consciences of all good men on our side; yes, the consciences of this man Timmins and of the brewers are on our side;

and then, Brother Worthington," Allan added, softly,—"we have God on our side."

"But God doesn't seem to count for much against the saloon power of Chicago," said Mr. Worthington without thought of irreverence, and laughed at the shocked expression on the faces of his wife and daughters.

"I know," said Allan," it does seem so, and yet it cannot be so. The difficulty must all be on our side of the matter. God cannot fail to keep his promises. His honor is involved in it just as much or more, my brother, as He is greater than you or me."

Mr. Worthington said no doubt that was true, but, as a practical man, he preferred to keep out of a desperate and hopeless fight. He could not afford to have his buildings blown up or burned down or his stock poisoned. The only thing to do, he supposed, was to grin and bear it.

Allan was forced to admit the practical wisdom of this view, and yet could not help believing or at least hoping, that something could be done, and that no community, even within twenty miles

of Chicago, need submit tamely to such outrages.

By the middle of March, spring was evidently on the way, and word had circulated that Timmins had applied for a license to sell beer and liquor on the Yellow Springs grounds for the summer months. Allan was greatly worried. Apparently the fight was almost, if not entirely hopeless and nothing could be done. Certainly he could do little or nothing unless the church would stand by him, and that they were afraid to do. He spoke of the matter on Sunday morning, and was so indignant that such a condition of affairs could be possible, that the soap box pulpit more than once trembled to its base. He declared himself willing to see what could be done if the church and community would give him even a partial support. Mr. Worthington smiled and shook his head while most of the women, young and old, looked worried and anxious.

To Allan's surprise, help and encouragement came from an unexpected quarter. Mr. Gruber, who had lately united with the church, and who

was of such a quiet inoffensive nature that no one would have suspected him of being the first to come forward in such a cause.

"If you want to fight that Sunday picnic, Mr. Fairly," he said, "I'll do all I can to help you."

And so, before Allan took the train for the city the next morning, he and Mr Gruber had planned the first stage of the campaign. They would present a petition to the Commissioners of Cook county, setting forth the nature of the picnic and the outrages upon the community, and protesting in the name of law and order and decency against the granting of a license. Mr. Gruber felt certain that he could secure the signatures of a number of the voters of the village and the farmers within miles around, although he feared that a number would be too timid to sign it, even though they had suffered on account of the picnic, for fear of Timmins and the men who were his friends.

Allan suggested that perhaps it would be well before circulating the petition, for either Mr. Gruber or himself to see Timmins and request

him to keep his picnics somewhere within the bounds of law and order, during the coming summer, as the little church of Yellow Springs wished to hold meetings, and under the conditions that had prevailed for several years, none of them could venture on the road on Sundays. Mr. Gruber thought it could do no harm although he did not think it wise to let Timmins know anything of their plan of campaign.

It so happened that the great Mr. Timmins arrived at the Springs that very morning, to make some preliminary arrangements about the grounds, and Gruber meeting him on the street, presented the matter to him in his quiet way. Mr. Timmins was very much amused. The idea seemed to strike him as being supremely ridiculous that a little church of only fifteen members should presume to raise a protest against his doing as he pleased on the Yellow Springs grounds, and, for that matter, any where in the country for miles around.

"What the devil, Gruber, do you think I care for your church people, I'm running that pic-

nic to make money, and I don't give a———— whether you people like it or not. And now what do you propose to do about it?"

Mr. Gruber was indignant, even angry, but took pains not to let Mr. Timmins know it.

"Well, Timmins," he replied quietly, "we thought we'd speak to you about it, and give you a chance to do the right thing. If you won't why I guess it's our first move."

Mr. Timmins laughed; it was too amusing for anything; he would be glad to know what the fools proposed to do in the matter. He had been in Chicago politics for twenty years, and the idea of the churches cutting any figure, when he had the saloons back of him, had never occurred to him. He was curious to know what they thought they could do.

But Gruber was noncommittal. Perhaps they could do nothing. They would look into the matter and find out, and Mr. Timmins would learn in due time. And Mr. Timmins, still greatly amused, went into Mr. Cropley's saloon near the station, to get a drink, and to talk about the

fools of church people who imagined they could interfere with business, especially his business.

Now Mr. Cropley's wife and daughters were members of the little church, and they had brought word of Allan's sermon the day before, and how he had pounded the soap box in his protest against the Yellow Springs picnic, and the manner in which it was conducted. Mr. Cropley's saloon was not so far from the picnic ground but that he received a share of the business, to say nothing of what he sold to those who came from the city in wagons and other vehicles. He agreed with Timmins that a little church of fifteen people could do nothing, absolutely nothing, against the great saloon power of Chicago. "But it was too bad none the less to have such fools as Gruber and Fairly in the community. They would make talk, even if they did not make trouble."

Meanwhile, Allan made the matter the subject of much earnest prayer and thought. It seemed like a hopeless undertaking for their little church to even protest against giving Mr. Tim-

mins a license; but they were in the right, and the life of the church was at stake.

But the case was not nearly so hopeless as Mr. Gruber and Allan feared. It so happened that, a short time before, Chicago had sent a number of the Cook County Commissioners to the penitentiary at Joliet. A wave of reform swept the county, and the majority of the new board was composed of the best men of Chicago, leading members of Chicago's greatest churches, superintendents of Sunday Schools, to say nothing of others. Possibly not before or since have the conditions been so favorable as at that time.

The whole story of the fight against the Yellow Springs license is too long to give in detail. Mr. Gruber went quietly to work, and, before either Timmins or Cropley knew what was doing, had secured a number of signatures of voters, both in and about the Yellow Springs requesting the honorable board of Cook County Commissioners, in view of the notorious facts, to refuse Mr. Timmins petition for a license. Not content with that, they carried the war into Africa, and pre-

pared to have Mr. Timmins arrested, and fined for selling liquor on Sunday and also for selling to minors. To do this, they must have help, both financially and otherwise, and for that Allan must, if possible, secure the assistance of Long Tom Waxworth, whose large farm lay between Chicago and the Springs, and whose fruit trees and chicken roosts had suffered more than once from the depredations of the picnicers.

"Mebbe he wont see you, Mr. Fairly," said Mr. Gruber as they talked the matter over. "You see he is confined to his room at his hotel and they say doesn't see anybody, but he can't more than say no."

"Mr. Waxworth doesn't see anyone," said the clerk as Allan presented his card with his request,' 'but I'll send it up and see."

But Mr. Waxworth was willing to see Mr. Fairly, and Allan soon found himself looking at a large heavy set man who leaned back in a rocker with one bandaged foot resting upon a chair. He held Allan's card in his hand.

"Are you the preacher that's fighting those

sons of guns out there at Yellow Springs?" asked Mr. Waxworth in a powerful voice.

"I'm one of them, Mr. Waxworth" Allan replied," "Mr. Gruber has done more than I have."

"O yes I know about Gruber, but you're the man that started the fight. Come over here; I want to shake hands with you. I always did like a man with a backbone; and I guess, from what they tell me, that you've really got one. Have a drink of whiskey," pointing to a flask and glasses on the stand by his side.

Allan explained that it was against his principles, with thanks for the invitation, but was decidedly ill at ease in the great man's presence.

"Well, I won't lay that up against you," continued Mr. Waxworth. "Whiskey is a kind of stuff that won't hurt you, if you let it alone."

"Unless you happen to be the wife or child of a man who doesn't let it alone," said Allan with some spirit.

But the great man only laughed. "That's just like you preachers; you can't miss an opportunity of preaching a sermon." Allan was both con-

fused and ashamed. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Waxworth, I was thinking of the wives and children of drunkards, who never touch drink and yet it doesn't leave them alone."

"No harm done young man," replied Mr. Waxworth, more quietly, "I don't know that my wife and children ever suffered because I drink a little whiskey, but, of course, there are plenty that do. But let's get down to business. What do you want me to do?"

Allan reviewed what had already been done, and explained that now, having the petition against the license ready to present to the Commissioners, they wish to have Timmins charged with selling to minors, and, also, with breaking the law by selling liquor on Sunday. But they needed money to prosecute the case, and money was a scarce article. They thought, he said, that a public conviction would make their case against Timmins all the stronger. Mr. Waxworth agreed with their plans, promised a generous check if they were in need, and said that

his lawyer would attend to the prosecution of Timmins for selling to minors.

"Let me know if there is anything more that I can do for you, young man," said Mr. Waxworth as Allan bid him good bye, greatly pleased and encouraged to find sympathy and help in so unexpected a quarter.

Within a week or two Mr. Timmins no longer was so very much amused over the situation as he had been at first. He was greatly surprised to find himself arrested for selling without a license, also for selling to minors, still more surprised to find Mr. Waxworth's attorney back of it. He paid his fines and apparently appealed to his powerful friends, the brewers, but was several days realizing that this interference with business had all come from the little church of Yellow Springs. It was something so unheard of in his experience, that he had the greatest difficulty in adjusting himself to this remarkable fact.

He was still more surprised to learn that there was a hitch of some kind, in the matter of

his license at Yellow Springs. That man Gruber and that man Fairly had actually presented a petition to the Commissioners against his license, and the matter was held up in the license committee. Then matters began to look serious. There was even danger that the committee would recommend against his license and that would certainly be beyond all precedent.

It was about this time that there came a great pressure from somewhere to compel the committee to recommend in favor of Mr. Timmin's license, and for the board as a whole to grant it. Prominent citizens were moved to talk with certain members of the license committee, and urge various powerful reasons why the interests of either the Republican or Democratic party demanded the granting of the license.

The greater the pressure for the license the firmer Allan stood for what he considered the demands of law and order. He called upon and endeavored to interest every public man in the city whose influence might, in any way, count against the license. From some of whom he

expected the most, he got least encouragement; and from some of whom he expected nothing, he received substantial help.

At Yellow Springs interest in the fight reached the boiling point. It was no longer possible for many to be noncomittal. Mr. Worthington signed the petition and used his influence to prevail upon others to do so. Mr. Cropley was very angry. He refused to permit his wife and children to attend church, swore that Fairly should never have a dollar of his money and to crown all sent Allan word that he would shoot him on sight if he ever came to that part of the town.

Allan was frightened. The feeling against him on the part of those who sympathized with Timmins and Cropley was very bitter and he did not know when they might do him some violence. He was warned that more than one man had threatened him. But Allan did not stop fighting. He was, he thought, simply doing his duty, and if he were risking his life he was doing no more than any good soldier was supposed to do.

The license committee appointed a time in which they would hear the testimony of both

sides of the controversy. At one end of the room in which the committee sat, was Mr. Timmins and his witnesses, the sight of anyone of which, Allan thought, was enough to condemn his cause, while Gruber whispered, "A lot of Bridgeport toughs."

At the other end were Allan, Gruber, and the witnesses who were bold enough to testify. The testimony when all in was entirely against the character of the picnic. The committee was assured that this was only a small part of the evidence that could be secured if they wished. The result was that Mr. Timmins and his witnesses were thoroughly beaten and that afternoon the committee recommended that the board refuse Mr. Timmins' application for license.

Allan supposed that the battle was won, but soon learned his mistake. When the recommendation came before the Commissioners Mr. Timmins and his friends had sufficient influence to refer it back to the license committee for reconsideration.

One member of the license committee, whom

Allan knew as the Superintendent of the Sunday School of the great Seminary church, who had stood persistently and courageously against the license, took Allan to one side at the next meeting of the committee and said:

"See here, Fairly, you're stirring up an awful muss about this Timmins license. You've no idea of the pressure they have brought upon the board. Isn't there some way in which this matter can be compromised?"

Allan assured him that he was sorry to make trouble but that they simply stood upon their rights. The law was on their side and if the committee wished more evidence they could produce tons of it. The facts were simply notorious.

Again the committee voted against the license, and again the Board as a whole referred it back for reconsideration. The third time the committee voted no, and the third time the Board referred it back. The fate of the little Yellow Springs church trembled in the balance.

All the while Allan and the members of his church were praying as they had never prayed

before. There was hardly a conscious moment, that Allan was not in his heart praying for the Lord to give them the victory.

At last Mr. Timmins sent one of his friends to Allan asking if he would compromise. Allan replied that he would. On what conditions? Timmins must give a five thousand bond not to hold any Sunday picnic at Yellow Springs that summer, and agree to respect law and order during the week, and they would withdraw their opposition to his license. And so the agreement was made, the bond drawn up and signed and the notorious Yellow Springs Sunday Picnic, for that summer at least, became a thing of the past.

One Monday morning, as Allan was on his way to the station, he passed Mr. Timmins and two others who were strangers. Timmins turned to his companions after Allan had passed and remarked, "That man cost me ——— thousand dollars!" The number of thousands Allan did not hear, but he had heard enough. The Soap Box pulpit had, with the help of God and God's people, won a victory even over the great saloon power of Chicago.

CHAPTER FOUR

Striking Twelve at Petawan

Soon after the little church at Yellow Springs was convinced that the Sunday Picnic was indeed a thing of the past, for that summer at least, Allan again urged the subject of a building of their own, and, encouraged by their recent victory, they agreed to see what could be done.

Mr. Worthington was almost the only one who had property but all had what was of still greater value, willing hearts. It would be too long a story to tell how, in the face of the greatest discouragements, with many, who claimed to be friends, prophesying certain failure, the neat little church of Yellow Springs was built and paid for. How Mr. Merriman, who never came to church, gave the lot; how the carpenter who did

the work was willing to trust them for his money; how Mr. Worthington got special prices from Chicago lumber dealers on the lumber; how the young farmers hauled the lumber the eighteen miles from the city in order to save freight; how those who had no money gave work, some one day and some a week; how Mr. Chester who had only one arm, having lost the other under Grant, painted the church for the first coat as his contribution ;how they had a concert given by some student friends of Allan from the Seminary; how they sang a cat song that brought down the house; how they had suppers where the people gave the victuals, then came and paid for the privilege of eating them. How Mr. Jones, the well known and brilliant reader from Howard College, who happened to be at the Seminary, kindly gave a reading for the benefit of the church; and how the young people sold tickets for the reading all over the country round about and even on the suburban trains going into the city; and how as a result of Mr. Jones' kindness and the willing heartedness of the people the

baby organ was traded for a real church organ; how Allan happened to hear of the great Seminary church in the city putting down new matting and easily secured the gift of what was worth having of the old, and then how, the Sunday before the church was dedicated, he preached on, "And so built we the wall for the people had a mind to work."

It was not long after the victory over the picnic that Allan began to feel that for some reason he had lost ground in the estimation of the Seminary faculty. Nothing was said and it is quite possible that he was mistaken, but he could not help feeling that for some reason he was regarded as a student of rather erratic tendencies, well meaning, doubtless, but none the less likely to do things that men of well balanced judgment were in no danger of doing. This both irritated and hurt him. He could think of nothing that he had done that could give grounds for the charge unless it was the fight against the Sunday picnic. But was that any reason for putting him under ban and labeling him as unsafe? Had he done

any more than any man in his position should have done? Surely the laws of both God and man were on his side. Doubtless he had not been as wise as many others would have been, but he had simply tried to do his duty to the best of his ability and according to the promises he had made the Lord when he came to Chicago, to do his duty and take the consequences. And it seemed to him, too, that the Lord had honored his faith and obedience and given the victory. Did such principles and practice put one under the ban? Then again, he would assure himself that it was all a figment of his imagaination and that the faculty thought no less of him than before, for he was still a rather "poor student." Watkins took pains to remind him occasiontlly, and the reminder helped him to brace up to his work better.

Watkins, as an August senior, took pleasure in what he called "cutting Allan's wing feathers" and one method was to remind him of the Indian, who, when asked what he was doing for a living, replied that he was preaching.

"How much salary do you get?"

"Ten dollars a year," was the reply."

"Ten dollars a year! Why, that is very poor pay."

"O yes," said the Indian," but it is a very poor preach." Watkins declared that if Allan's salary at Yellow Springs were any indication it must be a very poor preach.

"My church seems to think it is good enough anyway," replied Allan gruffly not relishing the joke but Watkins laughed all the more. Then came what Allan has always called the great affair at Petawan, but he was careful not to tell Watkins the details until sometime afterwards.

It came about in this way. Allan felt that he had done all he could for the Yellow Springs church consistent with his studies, and probably thinking, too, that he was now ready for a larger work, resigned and looked for new worlds to conquer.

Petawan, seventy-five miles from the city, wished a supply, the superintendent said. Would Allan like to go there for a Sunday? Allan

would and to his surprise, as well as that of Watkins, was asked to come again the next Sunday and also to preach the annual sermon before the Petawan Bible Society. This society consisted of the three churches of Petawan and the annual meeting was a union meeting. The largest church in town would be packed to the doors. It was a great honor for a student to be asked to preach on such an occasion, Allan was sure, and told Watkins so, but Wat said it was simply the turn of their own church to furnish the preacher and Allan had been chosen because he happened to be available. This was the truth as Allan afterwards learned, but it only spurred him to greater efforts. He would show Watkins and the people of Petawan what he could do when he really had time for preparation, and other things were favorable.

For the next two weeks he scarcely ate or slept without thinking about the great sermon he must prepare. He would take the Bible as his theme, and with a great theme, and an audience worthy of the theme, why should he not rise to the occas-

ion and demonstrate, once for all, that although he was a poor student he was not at least a poor preacher. Watkins warned him not to overdo in his preparations, but Allan could not believe it possible to be too well prepared for so great an occasion.

At last the great time was at hand. Allan took the train for Petawan under a strain of anxious worry that an experienced man would have known how to avoid. Over and over he reviewed his main poits, fearful lest he should forget something, and kept his mind keyed up to such high tension that it was little indeed he slept that night and less breakfast he ate the next morning. He was determined that nothing should interfere with the great sermon.

At last the hour came, and the largest church of the town was filled with people. The state agent of the Bible society had accepted an invitation and was sitting back of the pulpit, a kindly old man, prepared to appreciate every good thing that the preacher should say. The whole congregation was evidently expectant, and Allan

realized that now was his time to"strike twelve" as Professor Friend would say.

The pastors of the other churches were present, and took part in the opening exercises. But why did thy persist in singing all the verses to the hymns; why did the choir sing such long anthems ;and, above all, why did the Bible Agent make such a long prayer? Would the agony of those anxious moments that seemed hours never be over?

At last! At last! The brother who presided announced that Brother Allan Fairly, a student of the Great Western Theological Seminary, had kindly consented to preach the annual sermon, and the society would now have the pleasure of hearing him.

How the next thirty minutes passed Allan could never tell with any degree of certainty. He had managed to announce his text with some strength of voice but thought his voice had never sounded so strangely before. He could not believe for a while that it was really his own voice. His knees trembled so that he was certain every

one in the congregation must see them and know how badly frightened he was. Then, an old man on the front row of seats encouraged him with a fervent amen. He could see that those in the back part of the congregation had difficulty in hearing him, some craning their necks and some with one hand to the ear. So far things were not quite so bad as they might have been. His first point was evidently one of some interest, and the audience gave attention.

But after that he was all at sea. What with the trembling of his knees, the choking sensation at his throat and the knowledge that his voice was not filling the church he was indeed in a bad way. But that was not all. His carefully prepared sermon had taken to itself wings and left his mind almost as completely blank as if he had never heard of the Bible. The brother on the front seat was perservering and still endeavored to lift him over the hard places with an amen or two, not so fervent as the first, but it was all to no avail. Allan made heroic efforts to stop the trembling of his knees as well as his voice and to recall the

outline of his sermon but he only made a bad matter worse, closed after what seemed an almost interminable time and sat down with a most humiliating sense of failure. He did not dare look the audience in the face as they sang the closing hymn. The sense of failure overwhelmed him. Yes, he had struck twelve certainly, twelve zeros, and big ones at that.

After the benediction by the Bible Agent the amen brother of the front row came up, shook Allan's hand and assured him: "You had a good text, brother, you had a good text." Allan thanked him, and was glad in his heart that there was at least one grain of consolation. The congregation filed out slowly, some with looks of disappointment, and others sympathetic but the most part seemed to feel rather imposed upon. He overheard one woman say to another as they reached the door, "Talks like he had his mouth full of butter!" As he walked along the street with his host and hostess, he felt that it was a case of "least said soonest mended" and was glad that they seemed to agree with him.

As they were seated about the room Allan turned to Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair and said:

"O, but wasn't that a fizzle! Such a fizzle! And I meant to strike twelve. Yes, twelve zeros!"

They comforted him as best they could, reminding him that he was only a beginner and would, doubtless, greatly improve with experience. Allan asked when the next train would go to Chicago, and was told that there was one at two o'clock in the morning and another at nine thirty. He would take the two o'clock, he said, as he was anxious to get back to Chicago but still more anxious to get out of Petawan as soon as possible.

One thing he could do at least, now that the great sermon had proved to be a great fizzle, and that was eat. He had eaten but little since he left Chicago and now he was hungry. He did ample justice to Mrs. Sinclair's lunch, took the alarm clock so as to be certain to make the train and retired to his room.

But again it was not to sleep. The night before he had slept little for worrying about the sermon

that he hoped would strike twelve, and now he could not sleep for thinking about how signally he had struck twelve. One thing was certain. He would never try again. "Dear Lord," he said as he tossed on his bed, "if you'll forgive me this time, I'll never try again."

It was not until a cup of coffee and a sandwich, at Briar Hill Junction the next morning, revived his spirits that he began to pluck up new courage and from there to the city reviewed carefully the whole proceeding to see where he had made mistakes, and resolved that from that day he would never hear a public speaker without trying to learn something from him. It was only long afterwards, however, that he was able to see that striking twelve at Petawan had not been entirely in vain.

CHAPTER FIVE

Thirty Dollars

The three years of life in the school of the prophets came to an end. The commencement exercises were held, the diplomas, each tied with a blue ribbon, given out, and Allan found himself ready for a pastorate, provided the pastorate could be found.

He had written to the superintendent of the great state of ———— offering to take the neediest field in the state. The superintendent seemed glad to hear from him, and gave him a letter of introduction to the supply committee at Buxter and Wolf Creek, which, he assured him, although not perhaps the neediest field in the state, was at least, one of the most difficult.

Buxter was built on the sand, of the Missawaki River valley, and there were times when it was

almost literally true that it was in the sand, especially during a dry time and a high wind.

Although containing less than three hundred people, Buxter had two churches, a grammar school, three saloons, and a town hall built with license money. The saloons were flourishing. The churches were so puny that both united could not support a weekly prayer meeting, and it was a miracle when they united.

Wolf Creek and Valley lay five miles to the north, across the sands, and contained some of the finest dairies, dairy farms, and cheese factories in the state. The people of Wolf Creek were law abiding and intelligent, and it was no unusual thing to see the best books and magazines on their sitting room tables. In spite of this, and perhaps because of it, although Wolf Creek had held religious services for twenty years, in the neighborhood church, there was neither Sunday school nor church organization. The atmosphere of the Valley was apparently one of skepticism, while that of Buxter though less skeptical was openly immoral.

Mr. John Mott owned one of the largest dairy farms in the valley with one of the largest and choicest herds, and, although neither he nor his family ever had time to attend church, gave thirty dollars a year to support the preacher. Mr. Mott believed in preaching, always had lived in such a neighborhood in New York, where he had been born and raised, and would not live in a neighborhood where there was no church, but had no time to attend himself. He was considered one of the best business men of that section, and was rated by the commercial agencies at forty to fifty thousand dollars.

The church at Buxter and the community at Wolf Creek gave Allan a call, which he accepted on the spot, as all he had in the world was in his trunk, excepting a small box of books in Chicago.

It was several weeks after settling down in Buxter that Allan met Mr. John Mott. Allan was much interested in him, he seemed a man of unusual energy and intelligence; said frankly that he supposed they ought to get out to church more, but with so much on his hands did not have

time. He had come from a part of New York State where they called ministers Dominie, and Allan was rather amused to find himself called by the name.

One night, several weeks after this interview, Allan went down to the station after the late train had gone west, to get some books which he was expecting by express. He found the agent's room, in the center of the station, was filled with men, some middle aged, but the majority young men, with quite a number of boys. He had heard the shouting and laughing as he came near the door and upon entering, found that two drunken men were the center of attraction. One of these to Allan's great surprise proved to be Mr. Mott. The other was a stranger. Both had reached the silly, maudlin stage and were making fools of themselves to the great amusement of the crowd.

The talk and laughter stopped as Allan inquired if his package had come. Mr. Mott was standing leaning against a table, his hat on one side of his head, the stub of a cigar in his mouth, and a drunken leer on his usually intelligent face.

"Why!" he exclaimed, "there's the Dominie! How do you do, Dominie? I am—mighty glad—to see you; I want—to ask you—a question."

Mr. Mott's words were by no means so straight and clear as the above would indicate, but the manner of a drunken man is too well known to need elaboration.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Mott?" Allan replied, trying to make the best of an embarrassing situation. "How are you tonight?"

"All right—Dominie!—I'm—fine as a fiddle."

Mr. Mott left the support of the table, staggered across the fioor, laid his hand in a firm grasp upon Allan's arm and pulled him into the center of the crowd, which came closer, greatly interested and amused.

But Allan saw nothing amusing in the situation. There was no telling what a man in such a condition might say and do, and Allan did not relish the idea of being the butt of two drunken men and the crowd of loungers, to say nothing of the laughing stock of the community, when the word got round, as it certainly would. He wished

very much to get away as quickly and easily as possible.

"Now, Dominie," continued Mr. Mott, steadying himself by holding onto Allan's arm with both hands, "I believe—you're—an honest man —and you—won't lie. I want you—to tell me—what you think of—a man—*in my condition?*"

This was both nuts and raisins to the bystanders who showed their enjoyment of Allan's embarrassment by the guffaw so characteristic of such a crowd.

Allan was frightened and at the same time worried. What answer could he make to such a man? Certainly it would never do to tell him just what he thought, and he was equally certain that he would not say what he did not think, so the only thing which occurred to him was to temporize and, if possible, get Mr. Watt's mind directed to something else. So he laughed as best he could, although he could see that it was rather a failure as a laugh, but, of course, there was no use in being any thing but good natured, and so, laughing, he tried gently to pull away saying:

"O, you don't care anything about what I think of you, Mr. Mott."

But Mr. Mott was not to be so easily put off. He tightened his hold upon the arm both to retain Allan and to steady himself.

"N-no, no—Dominie—no dodgin! I know—you're—honest man—I want to know—what you think—of a man—in *my condition!*" The last words with a hiccough that set the crowd laughing again.

Allan felt that his case was indeed desperate. He looked around upon the crowd for one symathizer to whom he could appeal by word or look for help out of his embarrassment, but all were apparently too greatly amused to offer any assistance. He knew that Mr .Mott gave thirty dollars to his salary, even though neither he nor his family ever came to church. He came to a sudden decision and, turning, laid his hand upon Mr .Mott's shoulder while the crowd stood almost breathless waiting to hear his reply.

"Well, Mr .Mott," he said controlling his voice as best he could," if you really want to know

what I think of a man in your condition, I'll tell you."

"That's what—I want—Dominie—I believe—you're—an honest man!"

"Well, Mr .Mott," Allan continued," I think it's a great mistake, very foolish indeed, for a man of your age and judgment to come down to town here and get into such a condition. Just think of the example you set before these men and boys. And that is'nt all! Think of the example you set before your own boys, fine boys I am told they are, will soon be young men. Would you like your boys to follow your example? And that isn't all, Mr. Mott, think of the effect upon your own soul. If you keep this up you'll be in the gutter some day, or perhaps fill a drunkard's grave?"

Allan had said more than he had intended and more, he felt, than was wise. He expected that the drunken man would get angry and abuse him, but Mr .Mott simply released his hold, caught the nearest arm for support, and replied good naturedly.

"Well Dominie—I thank you—I believe you're an honest man."

Not a word further was said as Allan secured his package of books, bade everyone good night, and left the room. The crowd had evidently been almost staggered by the surprise of such plain speaking.

Allan congratulated himself, as he returned to his room, upon having gotten out of the matter so easily. "It was pretty close to, 'Good bye, thirty dollars!" he said.

For several days the village of Buxter was agog with various accounts of Allan's conversation with Mott. The consensus of opinion was that he had made a mistake, gone entirely too far, and, although Mott had not apparently taken offense, there were not lacking those who were ready to do so for him. Perhaps they recognized that there were dangerous possibilities in having so plain spoken a man for the preacher of one of the village churches. There was no telling what he might do or say, and there were certain things in the lives of some of the leading citizens of

which the less said the better, certainly in a public way.

But this gossip was not all. A few days later, Allan met the treasurer of Wolf Creek, Mr. White, who, Allan was certain, was one of his staunchest friends. Mr. White evidently had something on his mind.

"Elder," he said, after a few moments conversation, "what did you do to offend John Mott, down in Buxter that night?"

"Why, is he offended?" Allan exclaimed. "He didn't seem to be that night! What does he say?"

"He swears he'll never give another dollar to your salary, says you insulted him; said he'd land in a drunkard's grave if he didn't lookout, and all that kind of thing."

This was indeed an unexpected turn of affairs. Allan had congratulated himself upon getting out of the matter so easily. Thirty dollars meant a great deal to him, he really could not afford to lose it, and yet, he had simply tried to do his duty. He told Mr. White the straight of the matter, explained Mr. Mott's condition and how he

had insisted upon knowing Allan's opinion, as an honest man, of a man in his condition. He had tried to get away, but the drunken man had held onto him, refusing to take no for an answer. No doubt wiser men could have gotten off without giving offense, but he had done his best. So with a sigh he told Mr. White to take the money out of his salary; he would lose it.

Mr .White was truly sorry, but the community had done their best for Allan and he did not think it possible to make good the money lost by Mott's defection. Allan said to himself as he walked away, and rather sadly, "It was good bye, after all!"

His first feeling was regret that he had spoken so plainly. Would it not have been wiser to have put Mott off with something like, "O, I think you are not quite yourself tonight. I'll talk with you some time again." Then, perhaps, he could have told a story, and under cover of the laugh, for the crowd was equally ready to laugh with him as to laugh at him, he could have made his escape. By the time Mott had become sober he

would have been ashamed of his question, and the thirty dollars would have been in no danger. But how about his reputation as an honest man, one who told the truth regardless of consequences? Could he safely have declined to accept such a challenge with its consequences without losing ground in his own self respect as well as that of the community? The problem was rather puzzling. His only consolation was that he had stood true to the best he knew. Other men would probably have been wiser, but he had done his best.

Several months passed, during which Allan saw nothing of Mr. Mott and heard nothing of any more sprees. He had learned that Mr. Mott had been in the habit, for years, of taking a spree every two or three months, but for some reason the last had frightened him for a while at least. Then came, one day, Mr. White with a surprise:

"Well, Elder, what do you think happened yesterday?"

"I can not imagine, Brother White, what was it?"

"Why, John Mott came around and paid his thirty dollars. He spoke kindly of you, too."

"Did he mention the conversation at the station?" asked Allan when he had recovered from his surprise.

"Not a word! Simply paid his money like he always did."

This truly was an unexpected turn of the wheel and Allan was glad that he had stood his ground. It pays, after all, he thought, to stand four square to the facts.

But there was still another surprise in store. One day several weeks after Mr .White's information, Allan took the train for the county seat and who should come and sit down by him but Mr. Mott, and he was his shrewd sober self. They talked of various things until Mr. Mott spoke, incidentally, of the Buxter saloons and the saloon keepers. Allan turned to his companion with the question:

"Why is it, Mr. Mott, that the saloon keepers hate a man of my profession so? I am against their business; I am compelled to be ,but if they

were in any trouble, there isn't a man in the country would do more for them than I would."

"Oh, I'll tell you, Dominie," Mr. Mott replied after a moment's hesitation, "They talk that way, but they know you're right, and they respect you for it."

All that Allan could say was that he was glad to know it, and the conversation changed. Did Mr. Mott intend Allan to infer that he knew Allan had told the truth in the station, that night, and, at heart, he respected him for it?

It would be pleasant indeed to be able to say that through Allan's influence Mr. Mott became a regular attendant at church, and in time a sober if not a Christian man, but the facts are sadly different.

Years afterwards, Allan received a letter from his friend, Mr. White, in which was the following paragraph:

"You remember John Mott, don't you, Elder? Well, for the last two or three years he has been getting worse and worse; would go on a spree every month and sometimes every week. His wife

died, you remember, about three years ago. She had a big influence over him, invalid though she was for years, and when she died he just seemed to let go. Then his business got all tangled up, as was to be expected with a man sober one day and drunk the next. To make matters still worse, he got to speculating and lost heavily; mortgaged his farm they say. Then as if that wasn't enough his eldest boy went on a spree, and under such a complication of troubles John gave up the fight. They missed him soon after dark, last night, and after a while found him leaning over the side of the water tank by the windmill where they water the herd. He had been dead for some time, apparently. His head was under the water in the tank. It is the most terrible shock that the Valley has had for years. He was a good business man, generous hearted almost to a fault, but he could not, or would not, let drink alone."

CHAPTER SIX

The Most Unpopular Man In Town

This was the position in which Allan found himself for several weeks in the spring following his first winter at Buxter and Wolf Creek. As the time for the spring elections approached, there was talk of licensing a fourth saloon in the village. The three saloons had flourished during the past year, so much so that a fourth man wanted a share of the business, it was said, and would apply to the new village officials for a license.

And so the Sabbath evening a week before the election, Allan preached on the license question. It was then that the dangerous possibilities of having so reckless and plain spoken a preacher become realties, as some had forseen they would. He was not content to preach against the license

system, as a system, but went so far as to point out some of the practical results of permitting a village to be run in the interests of the saloon business even though the license money did build the town hall and put clay on the sand of the main street. The saloons, he said, were persistent and defiant law breakers. They made no pretense of keeping the law, unless it was to their interest to do so. They sold to drunkards in defiance of law, to minors, in defiance of law, kept open after the lawful hours, for closing; permitted gambling of all kinds and made no pretense of closing on Sundays. In fact, Sunday was the day in which they did their best business. He spoke of having seen two boys staggering from one of the saloons, just the day before, boys certainly under fifteen years of age. He spoke of the school girls, still in short dresses, who were seen on the streets until late hours almost every night. Was it any wonder that three young women had been ruined within the last year. He spoke of the reputation of the village all through that part of the state, "As tough as Buxter," was a common say-

ing. Would they add to these calamitous results by still another saloon?

When Allan walked to the postoffice for his mail the next morning, he found himself the most unpopular man in town. Some who were always friendly made no reply to his greeting or spoke in the surliest tones. Several looked as if they would like to lay violent hands upon him. He overheard one man remark to another, as he passed, "Ripped the town up the back last night, —him!"

Brother Smith, the superintendent of the Sunday School, and Allan's most loyal friend in Buxter, had been much grieved by the sermon.

"I'm afraid that your goose is cooked here, Brother Fairly," he said. "The whole town is mad, excepting a few of us, and they say they'll never pay another dollar to your salary."

"All right, Brother Smith," Allan replied, "I am ready to go any time the people wish. But what are they angry about?"

"Why, the things you said last night."

"Isn't it true," replied Allan, "that the saloons

are openly defiant of law?"

"O yes, everybody knows that!"

"Isn't it true that they sell to drunkards, to minors, keep open after lawful hours and all day, Sundays, and permit all kinds of gambling in defiance of law?"

"Yes, that's true, but—"

"Isn't it true that boys as young as ten years get beastly drunk in the saloons?"

"Yes, I'm afraid it is!"

"Is'nt it true that mere chits of girls still in short dresses, are on the streets till late at night? Isn't it true that three young women have been ruined here within the last year?"

"O yes, its true, but, of course—"

"Did I say anything, Brother Smith, that every man and woman here doesn't know to be true? Isn't it a common saying in the neighboring towns, "As tough as Buxter?"

"Yes, yes, it's all true enough and yet—"

"And yet what, Brother Smith?"

"I'm sorry you preached that sermon. It's all true, but that wasn't the reason why the people

are mad. It was not only what you said, but the way you said it."

"How did I say it, Brother Smith?"

"You said it just as if you was mad because there was talk of licensing another saloon and was bound to make us all smart for it."

"Well, Brother Smith," Allan replied, "if that is the impression I gave I made a mistake, if I didn't sin. I have no right to get out of patience with people so long as the Lord doesn't get out of patience with me. I'll think it over."

Allan kept his promise, and not only thought over the matter, but made it a subject of earnest prayer. The result of both thought and prayer was the conclusion that he had not taken the wisest way in the matter, even though he had spoken nothing but the truth. Though speaking the truth he had not, apparently, spoken in love, but more in exasperation. That certainly, was not the spirit of his Master, and the more he thought and prayed over it, the more he resolved that if the opportunity came he would show Buxter and community that he would not only talk against

the saloons, but he would do what he could to help and save its victims.

After the first few days the saloon men decided that they would make Allan ridiculous by pretending to nominate him for village marshal at the coming caucus of the Citizen's Party. The nominees of this party were always the henchmen of the saloons, who took special pains to see that the village marshal was a man from whom they could fear nothing by way of impertinent inforcement of obnoxious laws. Jim Boyd, whose saloon was nearest to the station, and had the largest patronage, suggested that it would be a good joke on Fairly and make the community laugh at him, to pretend or perhaps actually to nominate him, for the office of marshal. They knew, of course, that he would refuse to accept.

It was the afternoon before the caucus that Brother Smith told Allan of the plan of Jim Boyd and others to turn the laugh on him. At first, Allan was quite disconcerted, and then, another thought came and he said:

"You tell Jim Boyd and his crowd that if

they would like to nominate me for marshal, to go ahead. I'll accept the nomination and also the office, if I am elected. I'd like to be marshal of this town for about six months. I'll warrant that things will be different from what thev have been in the last six months. I'll see that law means something more than a mere printed page."

Brother Smith saw the humor in the situation and gave Allan's message. The plan was abandoned, even more quickly than it had been instituted. Allan laughed in his sleeve when he met Boyd on the street, and said to himself, "Check! It's your next move, Mr .Boyd." The new marshal was a man whose ideas of law enforcement were not of so radical a character, and the fourth license was not granted.

And still the opportunity to demonstrate that he would do some thing more than talk against the saloons had not come, and Allan could feel that the village had not forgiven him. Then, one morning as he went for his mail, a most unexpected opportunity came and he did not hesitate.

Mr. Mott was not the only one of the dairymen of Wolf Creek Valley, who was in the habit of taking his regular sprees. Mr. Baxter had a fine dairy farm and a large herd, not so large as Mott's, but still larger than most his neighbors. He, too, was a good farmer and business man. For weeks he lead as sober and industrious a life as any one could ask. This would sometimes last for six months at a time and then, all restraint was useless. The first intimation his wife would have would be that he had not returned from town at his usual time and often would not return for days, at times, staying in Buxter, or the county seat ,for a week or more, indulging in a complete debauch.

The first thing to catch Allan's eye as he came out of the postoffice was Mr .Baxter sitting, very unsteadily indeed, upon the spring seat of his wagon box with top boards and extra side boards. This gave him quite an elevated position, all the more dangerous to a man in his condition. Another man who was much older, but in an almost equal stage of intoxication. stood by the

wheel and expostulated with Baxter who was determined to climb down and continue his spree, which had already lasted three days.

Allan noticed that the horses were young and spirited and were held by one of the crowd. The man by the wheel was Crimmins who had been Baxter's companion on his spree. Crimmins was urging Baxter to go home, and Baxter was determined not to do so until he had had at least another drink, and kept trying to climb down.

Allan had heard of the many narrow escapes Baxter had had on his way home from his sprees, and the idea came to him that he would take him home, and see that he arrived safely that once at least.

"Keep him a minute or so, Mr .Crimmins," said Allan, "while I go after my coat. I'll take him home."

Crimmins promised and was as good as his word. Allan climbed up to the high seat, after he had secured his overcoat, and took his seat by Baxter, who lurched against him as he turned in an effort to sit up straight.

"Is this— the elder?" he stammered as well as his swollen tongue would permit.

Allan smiled at the ludicrous situation and replied:

"You know me, don't you, Mr. Baxter? I'm going to take you home."

"Well—it's all right—Elder," replied Baxter with another lurch," it's all right— just so as you know where— you're goin?"

The crowd laughed at this and Allan could not help joining them. He believed that he knew where he was going full as well as his companion, he at least could sit up without falling off the wagon. He caught Baxter by the coat collar just back of the neck, with his left hand, gathered up the "lines" with his right, it was not in vain that he had learned to drive on the farm, told the man at the horses' heads to let go, and was soon on his way up the street, smiling to himself at the figure he cut holding onto Mr. Baxter's collar to keep him from falling off, as the wagon swayed. People lined the sidewalks and looked out of the windows and laughed at the unusual

sight, although a few saw more pathos than humor in the situation.

The drunken man was in no condition to realize the humor of the situation; did not seem to be aware of the hand upon his collar but was greatly troubled for fear Allan did not know where he was going.

Once out of the village, and on the sand road the horses were quite willing to moderate their pace, and gave no trouble all the way home. It was slow, weary going, however, and Allan's arm ached before they reached the mouth of the Wolf Creek Valley. Baxter talked every moment. Mostly the silliest of nonsense, with occasional maudlin sentiment, but lit up here and there with flashes of wit that made Allan laugh more than once. Baxter's characterization of the men they met on the road, or whose homes they passed, was often so shrewd and so accurate, that Allan has often wished he could have preserved them for future amusement.

When they came to the mouth of the valley, where the road turned north, Baxter grabbed at

the lines in an effort to get them out of Allan's hands and shouted, "Whoa!" The well trained horses stopped.

"What's the matter, Mr. Baxter?" said Allan.

"Why you're— on the wrong road—Elder,— you want—to go—that way!" pointing to the west.

"O no, Mr. Baxter," Allan replied. "We're on the right road, I'm sure. I travel it everv Sunday, you know."

"Well —it's all right, Elder,—just so— as you know—where you're goin!"

Allan laughed, assured him that he knew and drove on. The journey up the valley was without incident excepting that one of the sacks of ground feed rolled off as they drove over a rough place. Allan dare not stop to get it and so drove on.

At last, long after dinner hour, they drove into Mr. Baxter's yard greatly to the surprise, not to speak of other feelings, of Mrs. Baxter. Allan climbed down as quickly as possible to save Mr. Baxter a fall, but that gentleman, re-

senting such anxiety on his part, half climbed and half fell off in imminent danger, as Allan thought, of breaking his neck .Mrs. Baxter reached her husband's side as soon as Allan and between them Baxter was helped to his feet and into the house where he was given several cups of strong coffee and put to bed to sleep off the effects of his spree.

Mrs. Baxter was thankful for what Allan had done, but he could not escape the suspicion that she would have been just as thankful if he had not done it. Few words were said as he ate a lunch, and then the hired man took him the greater part of the way to Buxter.

Mr. Baxter never referred to the matter in talks he had with Allan afterwards, but the reader will be glad to know that he reformed, and, the last Allan heard from him, he was a sober man.

What did Buxter say? Very little, indeed, that reached Allan's ears, but in some way he knew that he had been forgiven; the subscription list, that year, was larger than the year before, and he was no longer the most unpopular man in town.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Did God Hear?

Time and again, as Allan drove up and down Wolf Creek Valley, the question arose in his mind as to whether he was doing any real good or not. The people were kindness itself, and, while there was doubtless more than one cause for criticism of his sermons, and the attendance was not all that he could have hoped, it was still, probably, all that could reasonably be expected, and he was surprised more than once that as many people came as did. Not that he had any false modesty, but, trying honestly to face the facts and remembering Wat's story of the India. Allan was forced to admit that it was rather a poor preach.

He could not resist the impression that the time was near when he must see a more definite

advance than he had yet seen. Would it not be possible to have more social life in the Valley? He felt that it would do the people good, the young people, certainly, and the adults, possibly, to get together once a month or so especially during the winter evenings and "have a good social time." With some misgivings, the attempt was made by holding a "Mummy Social" at the home of Mr. White, which function was so pronounced a success that similar events became a matter of course.

But this, Allan felt, although a step in the right direction, was still not all that could be desired. The services in the Valley were held on Sabbath afternoon, so that each Sabbath evening there was time for a religious gathering of some kind, providing that the people could be gotten together. Would it not be possible to organize a young people's society, a Christian Endeavor, that could hold a prayer meeting at least every other Sunday evening.

He broached the subject to some of the young people, and they assured him that it would be an

impossibility to hold a prayer meeting. Why, they declared, there had not been a prayer meeting in the valley for twenty years. The people simply would not attend. The older ones had long since gotten out of the habit of attending, even of the few who had once been in the habit. The young people had not learned and had no desire to do so. And then, it was urged, even though these difficulties were overcome, there was the question of the dark nights. They were not so fond of driving in the dark and caring for a team, to be willing to attend a prayer meeting.

Allan replied that they were willing to come, even on dark nights, to the socials. That, however, they replied was a different proposition entirely. And, of course, it was as Allan had to admit.

So he made the question a matter of prayer, and often as he prayed there came to his mind the various objections and difficulties which so often arose. Could it be true that prayer, real prayer, availed? He looked up beyond the great

bluffs on either side of the valley, as he drove along the road, to the blue sky, and wondered and hoped and doubted and at times believed. He looked up at night at the great dome of heaven, spangled with stars, recalled as best he could all he had learned about them and tried to conceive of the Being, great enough to make the universe and the fly. Did God hear? And if he did could he or would he answer? And if so, under what conditions? These were questions that more and more demanded answer as Allan thought on the subject of prayer, until he felt himself worried and almost irritated by their magnitude and insistence.

One thing, at least, he could do. He could make an attempt to organize a prayer meeting and, even though it failed, there would be no harm done that he could see, and there was at least a possibility of good.

Every other Sunday evening he was at liberty as the churches in Buxter alternated in the Sunday evening services. Allan waited until the time of the new moon was near, and announced that,

on the next Sunday evening there would be an exhibition of stereopticon pictures of the Holy Land, at the home of Mr .and Mrs. Wilson, after which an attempt would be made to organize a society of Christian Endeavor. The pictures were not a brilliant success, partly because of the poor light and partly because of Allan's lack of skill in handling the lantern, but the organization of the society was effected without difficulty.

Two weeks from that night, it was agreed, they would hold their first prayer meeting at the home of the post mistress.

Those two weeks were full of anxiety for Allan. Few conscious moments passed that he was not thinking about, or praying for, the Wolf Creek prayer meeting. And, mixed with these moments of faith, were moments of doubt, that quite frightened him. At times, prayer seemed a glorious fact and, again, the silliest farce. What a privilege to be able to invoke the aid of the Infinite! What a farce to forget that every thing must be under the dominion of law! Someone had said, "Given the universe to find God." A

very great problem, indeed, but could it possibly, be any greater than the other problem, "Given the universe without God?"

Alternating thus between hope and fear, faith and doubt, Allan drove up the valley, that Sabbath evening, in a state of mind that was a mystery to himself. He wondered whether there would be any one present. It was a perfect moonlight night and there was no excuse on that account, but people never lack for excuses, he thought, when they wish to find them.

His heart sank as he drove into the barn yard. Mr. White's team was the only one he could see. Of course, he had expected him and his family, but were there any others. He looked carefully at the hat rack in the hall way as he entered the house, and saw that there were evidntly more people present than the White family, but his surprise came when he looked around the large rooms to find that they were lined with people, men, women, and children. There was that much encouragement, at least, but would any one pray?

They sang several familiar hymns, a lesson

from scripture was read, Allan lead in prayer, they sang several more hymns, Allan explained the lesson, then led in prayer again, all the while fearful to put the matter to the supreme test and learn whether God had heard and answered his prayer or not. They sang several more hymns, and then, ashamed of his vacillation, he proposed that all kneel and unite in what the Endeavorers call a chain of prayer, the nature of which he explained.

Every one kneeled and, again, Allan led, requesting others to follow. Mr. White was next to him and followed with a short prayer. Then, to Allan's delight, the spirit of prayer as he said, afterward, went round the room like the fire of God. Old and young, middle aged and children, excepting the very smallest, offered their petitions, and the first prayer meeting in twenty years in Wolf Creek Valley, came to a triumphant close.

As Allan drove south toward Buxter, he looked up, beyond he light clouds floating over the valley, to the heavens above, and, as the tears

rolled down his cheeks, whispered, "Forgive me!" And God heard.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Fugitive

"Here's a letter for you, Elder," said the postmistress one morning in the late fall.

The letter was addressed, "To the Pastor of Any Church, Buxter,——" The postmark was of a town in Nebraska. In the lower left hand corner was the word, "Important!" heavily underscored. The letter read as follows:

"Dear Brother: Whoever you are, into whose hands this comes, let me entreat you, in the name of our common Master, to give it immediate attention.

"Mrs. Mary Tentor, a member of my church, who has heretofore borne a spotless reputation, a week ago today suddenly left her husband and two little children. Her husband, who is a locomotive fireman, was away on his run. She left a

note saying that she was never coming back, would secure a divorce, and marry the man she loves and who loves her and who will be glad to see that she has all that she needs of the necessaries of life.

"It now transpires, so her aunt, who is caring for the children ,tells me, that the poor foolish woman planned to meet her lover either in Omaha or some place farther east, but, in some way, their plans miscarried and she has gone to visit her sister, a Mrs. Len Sinclair, who lives in your town.

"This Mrs. Sinclair is said to be a much married woman, but you probably know more about her than I do. She and her daughter, who claims to be a widow, visited here several weeks, last summer and it was then, the aunt thinks, that they persuaded Mary to leave her two babies and secure a divorce.

"I wish you could see the children. Two sweeter little tots, a girl two, and a boy four, one seldom sees. The little boy has dark hair like the mother, and the baby is fair like the father. The mother

always seemed to love her children very dearly, and every one is astonished that she could possibly leave them.

"Scott Henson, the alleged lover, is a passenger brakeman, rather a dashing fellow and a great favorite with a certain class of girls along the line of his run. Some say that he has a girl in every town, but, at any rate, his reputation is far from the best. The aunt tells me that he was an admirer of Mary's before she married Tentor, and would have married her, but for her aunt's influence.

"Tentor is a steady going, reliable fellow, not so much of a lady's man as Henson, but really worth a dozen of him. I judge that he has not been able, or perhaps willing, to dress Mary and the children as she wished.

"Now, my brother, will you not find this misguided woman, and do what you can to influence her to return to her husband and children?

"We know that she and Henson have not met, as yet, but there is no telling how soon they may, so kindly give the matter prompt attention."

Allan knew of Mrs. Sinclair, and knew that her reputation was bad and her daughter's still worse. For a good woman to be in such a home was dangerous indeed.

The postmaster read the letter and remembered seeing quite a pretty little black haired woman in company with Mrs. Sinclair, or her daughter, Mollie. They had inquired for letters addressed to Mrs. Theresa Brown.

What was to be done? Allan hesitated as to what was the proper course to pursue. He knew where Mrs. Sinclair lived. Would it be wise for him to call, inquire for Mrs. Tentor, and, if possible, persuade her to return to her home? But, would not the gossips talk about him, a young man, attempting a task which properly belonged to some older man? And yet, there was no older man to do it. He decided that it was another case of do his duty and take the consequences, and so, with the letter as explanation and authority, he soon stood before the plain brown house which Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair called home.

The shades were drawn clear down, and no

one responded to his knock. Could they have gotten warning in some way, and shut themselves in? He hurried to the station near by and was informed by the agent that Sinclair and his wife and two other women, whom he did not notice particularly, had taken the train, the afternoon before, for Tilson Junction, twenty miles to the north and west. The agent could tell nothing of where they had gone from the Junction, but suggested that as Mollie Sinclair had a lover, a brakeman in the yards, at the Junction, some trace might be found of them.

There was a train for the Junction within ten minutes, and Allan had barely time to write a note to his land lady, saying that he would be away for perhaps a day or so, and find a boy to carry it, when the train came.

At first, no one at the Junction recalled having seen the party of three women and a man the day before, there were so many people coming and going, until Allan mentioned the name of Mollie Sinclair. Everybody knew her, but, whether she had gone further west, or whether she had

stopped at the Junction, no one could recall, till one man remembered having seen her on the street that morning.

Didn't Miss Sinclair have a lover working in the yards there? Allan asked. Yes, Tim Daly, but he had taken a regular run just a few days before and was a hundred miles away. Further search seemed hopeless when some one else remembered that, not long before, the Sinclair girl had worked in the place called The Home Hotel. Perhaps she had gone there, or perhaps they could tell where to find her.

The outside of the Home Hotel was not impressive, and the inside even less so. A large, coarse faced, deep voiced woman answered Allan's knock on the inner office door and asked to know his business. He extended his card and explained that he wished to see Miss Sinclair on very important business, and would be grateful indeed for information as to where she could be seen.

The woman hesitated, looked over the card in her hand and then the young man before her, and

replied gruffly that the girl was in the house. She would tell her. Would the gentleman take a seat in the parlor?

Allan accepted the invitation and, while waiting, stared at the wreath of wax flowers under a glass, and tried to imagine how any one could see any beauty in them. Perhaps they were an heirloom, and perhaps,—but then Miss Sinclair entered the room having taken time to change her gown.

There is no need to enter into a detailed account of the conversation. Miss Sinclair vowed that she did not know where her aunt Mary had gone. She knew she had made up her mind never to return to such a stingy man as John Tentor. Mr. Henson was a perfectly lovely man. Aunt Mary was clean daft about him, and would marry him, just as soon as she could secure a divorce.

A half hour passed in futile questionings and evasive answers. Miss Sinclair was determined to tell nothing.

Allan saw that he was taking the wrong course and appealed to the girl's nobler nature. And

then, after another half hour of pleading, she said that Mr. Sinclair's parents lived at Chester, thirty miles away, and, perhaps, aunt Mary had gone there.

With this clue, Allan was compelled to be satisfied and assure the girl that she had made no mistake for she knew well that her aunt was in great danger.

The first inquiry at Chester was made at the drug store nearest the station. The druggist knew the Sinclairs well, the old man lived on a farm north of town, and several of the boys were married and had homes of their own near by. "Why there goes Tom Sinclair now," he said, "I'll call him in, and he can probabaly tell you, in a minute, just what you want to know."

Tom soon proved that the druggist was right. Allan explained his errand in Chester. Did Mr. Sinclair know whether his brother, William, his wife and another woman were at his father's on the farm? He did and soon gave his opinion of Bill for having anything to do with such a woman. Yes, it was a little black eyed woman,

Billy's wife's sister, who came along, but of course, nobody knew that she had left her husband and children.

It was between three and four o'clock in the afternoon before Allan could secure a livery team, and start for the farm, seven miles north. A storm of rain blew into their faces and soon chilled through the light overcoat which Allan wore. The rain changed to snow, and the temperature fell still more. The driver missed the road and wanted to turn back, but Allan felt that he had not come that far to turn back at the last moment.

Inquiries at various farm houses soon put them on the right road again, and, finally, they drove up to the little farm house. Allan could see that there was evidently a commotion going on at the sight of the buggy, but did not understand its full significance.

Old Mr. Sinclair answered Allan's knock and was anything but cordial in his greeting. After some difficulty, he admitted that Mrs. Tentor was there. He would show her the card, perhaps

she would see him. Would he have a seat?

During the hours when he had waited for the trains, or was in them, Allan had given much thought as to how he should broach the subject to Mrs. Tentor, and what arguments he should use in case he found her. He was not left waiting long. Mrs. Tentor entered the room with a set of lip and poise of head that showed plainly how glad she was to see this stranger who presumed to interfere in her family affairs. Allan saw at once that here was a little woman with a will of her own, and a courage to exercise it.

"Is this Mrs. Tentor?" Allan asked as he held out his hand.

"Yes, sir!"

"I am sorry to trouble you, Mrs. Tentor. My name is Fairly, I am pastor of the———church at Buxter, perhaps you have seen or heard of me."

"I've seen you on the street there," replied Mrs. Tentor sitting very straight in her chair, her pretty lips drawn to a line.

"Then you will understand, when I tell you

that I received a letter from your pastor, this morning, in which he requests me to have a talk with you. Here is the letter. Do you wish to see it?"

"It won't do any good for you to talk with me, or for Mr. Smith to write to me, I'm never going back to live with John Tentor. I'll starve to death first."

"Was your husband cruel to you, Mrs. Tentor?"

"Cruel! I should say he was!"

"Did he ever strike you? Some men do strike their wives. Did your husband ever strike you?"

"No, he never laid a hand on me, he didn't dare, but he was cruel just the same. He wouldn't give me a dollar to spend if he could help it, he was so stingy and mean that, if I hadn't been a dressmaker and knew how to make my own clothes, I wouldn't have had a new dress from one year's end to another. He made good wages, too, but he was stingy, he wanted to put it in the bank. A girl wants something new and pretty once in a while. I didn't marry him to slave and work, and dress like a dowdy. Why, I had

to take in sewing to get the clothes needed for myself and the children."

"I suppose the children had so little to eat that they looked half starved all the time, didn't they?"

"Half starved! No indeed, they had the roundest faces and the fattest little arms of any children around."

"Did you pay the grocery and meat bills or did your husband?"

"Why, of course he paid them, what else could he do?"

"Then, if I understand you aright, my sister," said Allan gently, "you left your husband and children because he wouldn't give you the money to buy all the clothes you need? Is that right?"

"O, that's only one thing. The real reason is that I don't love him. I never did love him. I ought never to have married him. I wanted to marry another man, but aunt Mary said so much against him that I give up to her and married John. But I've been sorry I did ever since."

"That is certainly a sad state of affairs. I

suppose that is the reason why you left your children, too, Mrs. Tentor?"

"What do you mean by 'why?'" and the black eyes snapped.

"That you didn't love them! You left your husband because you no longer love him; you have left your children also, and, I suppose, it is for the same reason."

"I'd have you know, sir, that I love my children as much as any mother. Everybody said I kept them as neat as a pin, and they were little pictures, the darlings!" There was a trembling of the lips and a moisture in the eye, that showed Allan that he had touched the right chord. After a moment's effort at self control she continued:

"Of course, I couldn't bring them along. I've got to make my own way, now, and no one would take me if I had the children."

"I suppose Mr. Henson doesn't want you to have the children, Mrs. Tentor?"

"Mr. Henson! Who told you about him? O, I suppose Mr. Smith told you! No, Scott said he didn't care to be bothered with John's children,

after we are settled down in our own home. I suppose no man wants another man's children."

"I suppose you left the children with your aunt Mary when you started for Omaha. How old is your aunt, now, Mrs. Tentor?"

"Why do you ask such a question? She's pretty near fifty."

"How long did you live with her?"

"Ever since I was a little girl. My mother died when I was only five."

"Your aunt has been good to you, hasn't she, Mrs. Tentor?"

"Yes, yes, she's been like a mother to me." Mrs. Tentor felt for her handkerchief and the next moment was taking a woman's relief in tears. Allan felt that the victory was more than half won.

"Mrs. Tentor, my sister," he said, firmly, "I've come all the way from Buxter here to talk with you. Of course you may say it's none of my business and it is not, but in a true sense it is. I am not here to take your part or your husband's part. I am willing to believe all you say.

But you say he has never struck you and that you you and the children have plenty to eat. Let me tell you, Mrs. Tentor, that many wives are both starved and beaten and yet,for the sake of their children, they bear these troubles. Think of what you have done! Left your husband, whom you promised before God and the assembled witnesses to love and honor and cherish till death; think of those two sweet little children, your babies, whom you have left to the care of your aunt, already feeling the infirmities of age. It wasn't enough, apparently, that she has been a mother to you, you must take your babies to her and with a falsehood in your heart say, as I suppose you did, "Auntie won't you take care of the children today while I go to Omaha for some shopping?" You have burdened you old aunt with your children!"

Mrs. Tentor was sobbing, now, with her head on her breast, unable to make reply.

"Think of those dear little children! Mere babies. The little black haired boy only four. He looks like you doesn't he? Has your eyes and

hair. Of course you love him, you can't help it. When you dressed him up in his new little sailor suit, and, with the baby in the buggy, walked along the street, no mother was prouder of her children than you, I'll warrant. Of course you loved them! There were times, I suppose, when they made lots of extra work and gave you plenty of trouble to care for them, do your house work and sewing too, and, sometimes, you thought they were more bother than they were worth, but you really did not mean it. They made lots of work, but when the little boy put his arms around your neck and hugged you or patted your cheek, and said in his sweet baby way, "Pitty mamma I love you!" you were paid for all your work and anxiety. Isn't it true?" Redoubled sobs was the only answer.

"I've no doubt," Allan continued, "that your heart has hungered for your babies every hour since you left them, if only you permit yourself to think for a moment. You had steeled yourself against them, said you must not think of them, but, I am certain, you have thought of them many

times, and you would have given a great deal to see them, for just a minute, to know whether they are all right or not. Isn't it true?" No answer. The handkerchief had long since been wet with tears.

"But that isn't all, my sister," Allan continued. "You not only have not forgotten them, but you never can forget them, and that you, their mother left them when they were babies. God has so made us that there are somethings we never can forget, and the memory of your babies will follow you around the world, to your grave, and forever. You never can get away from it. You think you can, but you'll find out. You'll think of them by day and dream of them by night! You'll wake with a start because you heard the baby crying, or the little boy calling "Mamma! Mamma!"

"Oh, don't, please don't!" sobbed the poor woman.

"I must," Allan replied and the tears stood in his eyes, "it is true, and however it may pain you, now, it is much better to look the facts in

the face, when you may still go back an honest woman, than to wait until it is too late. You are a member of the church, Mrs. Tentor, and you know your duty. I'll warrant that you have not asked the Lord whether it was right for you to take this step. You knew well enough it was wrong. And why do you take this frightful risk? For love of a man who has a sweetheart in every town on his run. Oh, of course, he loves you more than all the others put together, or, at least, he tells you so. You ought to know whether it is true or not. But even if it is, he may tire of you very soon, such men generally do; they are taken with the last pretty face, and then you'll be deserted in turn."

Allan felt that he had said enough, perhaps too much, and that he must leave. She would not promise to write to her husband, but did promise amidst her sobs, to think about it. Allan stood by her, hat in hand, and said: "My sister, you are a fugitive,—a fugitive from duty. Go home; go back to your husband, your children and,—your God!"

She made no further promise, but Allan felt that she would go, and was glad, as he rode back to Chester, that he had been permitted to plead with this mother on behalf of her husband and children, yes, and her self.

He found the train connections back to Buxter so poor that it was the evening of the next day before he reached home. He had written Rev Smith of the interview and his belief that she would return. His heart was made glad, two weeks later, by word that she had returned. He was nearly seven dollars out of pocket, but he thought it a good investment.

CHAPTER NINE

Widow Cabbitt's Line Fence

Jim Boyd's saloon, in Buxter, being the nearest to the station had the largest patronage, and was for other reasons the leading saloon of the town. Boyd was the man who dictated in many ways the policy of the village, and was thus the political boss. The saloon was on the south end of the lot, on the corner. The north end of the lot was vacant.

The next lot west was owned by Widow Cabbitt, a member of Allan's church who had a large family and eked out the small pension which she received as a soldier's widow by taking in washing.

Mrs. Cabbitt's house was large, but none too large for her family and stood on the north end of her lot, facing the street running east and

west, and thus opposite the vacant end of Boyd's lot.

One day in the summer, Mrs. Cabbitt called upon Allan, at his boarding place, and asked his advice as to a proposition which Mr. Boyd had made, to trade his three room cottage much farther from the center of the town, for her house and lot. He offered to give her $300 to boot. Allan confessed his ignorance of real estate values in Buxter, and advised her to consult some business man in whom she had confidence and said:

"But, Mrs. Cabbitt, how could you and your family possibly live in three small rooms? I would advise you to go very slowly, indeed, in making such a trade." So Mrs. Cabbitt told Mr. Boyd that she did not care to trade.

A few day passed and again Mrs. Cabbitt called. This time she was plainly worried. Mr. Boyd claimed, she said, that a mistake had been made in placing the fence between the two lots. Because his lot was a corner lot, it was six feet wider than the one next to it. Mrs. Cabbitt, there-

fore, had six feet of his lot and he proposed to move the fence over to where it belonged, and that would make it quite close to Mrs. Cabbitt's house.

"Doesn't your deed state the width of your lot, Mrs. Cabbitt?" Allan asked, filled with foreboding.

"Oh, I don't know, Mr .Fairly. I never looked."

"You have your deed at home, haven't you?"

"Yes sir, but I never thought to look at it."

"Well, we'll have to get at the facts, Mrs. Cabbitt, before we can do anything one way or another. Of course, if he is right, I do not see how you can help yourself, but we'll be very certain that he is right before we give up. I'll be down this afternoon, right after dinner. You find your deed and we'll see what it says."

The widow left apparently much comforted, but Allan was worried. It did not seem possible that Boyd would make such a claim unless he was certain of his right, and yet, might it not be that he was trying to compel the poor widow to come to his terms? Might he not presume upon the

fact of her poverty, her scarcity of money, excepting when the small pension came, to try to frighten her into accepting his terms for the property. It did not seem possible that any man would be mean enough to try to take such an advantage of a poor widow and yet, it even looked probable. He talked with his friend, Mr. Smith, the Sunday School Superintendent, who was of the opinion that Boyd probably knew what he was talking about, and perhaps the best thing Mrs. Cabbitt could do was to accept his offer.

The deed was found to give the number of the lot, but said nothing as to its width. Allan went outside and was stepping off the lots, in order to get an estimate of their width, when Mr Boyd came out the side door of his saloon and wanted to know what in the ——he was doing. Boyd was evidently bordering on intoxication, if he had not long since crossed the border, and the insolence of his tone roused Allan as he had not been since he and Jake Young exchanged pleasantries in the hall.

"Mrs. Cabbitt says that you claim six feet of

her lot, Mr. Boyd," Allan replied. "I am simply guessing at the width of both of them according to the fence there."

"Yes, she's got six feet of my lot there. She's had it for years. I'm goin' to move my fence to day where it belongs, but it aint none of your —— business, that I can see."

Allan replied as quietly as he could: "Well, you see, Mrs. Cabbitt is a member of my church, and she naturally looks to me, as her pastor, for advice. I'm simply trying to get at the facts in the case."

"And I tell you, Mr. Preacher, that it aint none of your —— business!"

Allan was angry. He looked Boyd steadily in the eye for a second and said in his heart, "I'd give ten dollars if I wasn't a preacher for about ten minutes. I'd whip you, you scoundrel, or you would me." He even picked the spot at the base of the saloon keeper's ear where he wished to hit him first. Then came a vision of the disgrace he would bring upon his Master's cause, of how the papers would enlarge upon "a scrap between

a preacher and a saloon keeper," and thus was restrained from violence.

But he walked up to Boyd, brought his hand down upon his shoulder, none too gently, and said while his eyes flashed:

"And I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Boyd, and don't you forget it! If that six feet of land really belongs to you, all right, you can have it; but if it doesn't, I'll make it the dearest piece of land in this town before you get it. Just put that in your pipe!"

Allan turned and walked away, paying no attention to Boyd's muttered curses, and frightened at the storm of anger which filled his breast.

"The dirty scoundrel!" he said to himself as he walked along. "It isn't enough for him to try to cheat that poor woman out of her property, but he must curse me for taking her part. I'll give him a fight for it if it costs me every friend I have in the town. I'll get my church to help me, and we'll stand by the poor woman and see that she has her rights."

First of all, he must be sure of the facts, if

possible. He hunted the town over for a plat which would give the width of the lots, but none could be found. Probably because there was none, and, possibly, because they were unwilling to let him see it.

He consulted the church officers, urging that the church as a body rally to Mrs. Cabbitt's defense and see that she was protected in her rights. He met with nothing but discouragement. The officers had no doubt that Boyd was in the right. They were sorry for Mrs. Cabbitt, of course, every one knew she had a hard struggle to keep her family, but it would never do for them as a church, or as individuals to take any part. "It would hurt business," said Allan's best friend. "The saloon can control a lot of people here and if I was to go into this fight, they would boycott our store."

In short, Allan learned within a few hours that with the exception of one good old man, he stood alone, in defense of Mrs. Cabbitt. Grandfather Cowley said, "Brother Fairly is right, and the churches ought to stand by him." But the

overwhelming sentiment of the town was in the churches and out, "Let the preacher tend to his own business." But Allan thought he was attending to his own business. If it was not his business as a Christian man and a minister to stand by a poor widow in distress and see that she had her rights, he did not know that he had any business in Buxter that was worth while. At any rate, he would make it his business.

That same afternoon, Mr. Boyd proceeded to carry out his threat, moved the line six feet west and put up a tight board fence sixteen feet high, which so completely darkened the greater part of both kitchen and dining room that the family was compelled to use a lamp, excepting in the middle of the day. And it so happened that every time Allan passed the saloon, for the next few days, Mr. Boyd was either in his doorway or near by, and looked upon his enemy with a leer of triumph that Allan found hard indeed to bear patiently.

Poor widow Cabbitt was so frightened by the overshadowing fence that she was almost ready

to capitulate and let Boyd have the property on his own terms, but Allan cheered her with, "Why, Mrs. Cabbitt this fight is just begun. We haven't got our sleeves rolled up yet," and the widow went back to her washing by the light of a lamp.

It would seem that some one might have raised the question as to just why Mr. Boyd had gone to the expense of putting up a high board fence which enclosed nothing; and some might possibly have protested mildly against such a waste of lumber; and, of course, as to the widow's rights in the matter no one cared or dared to say a word, at least, none that came to Allan's ears.

It was all well enough to assure Mrs. Cabbitt that the fight had just begun, that he hadn't his sleeves rolled up yet, but the fact was that he did not know where to turn for the help he needed. Very probably, the case would go to court, there would be a bill of expense of some kind which the widow could not afford to pay, but neither could Allan for that matter. He needed a man with property and a moral backbone to

help in the fight. Then a happy thought came to him as most happy thoughts come, like an inspiration. There was the man he wanted, Mr. White of Wolf Creek Valley, a man with a real backbone instead of an apology in the form of gristle. He would see Mr. White, tell him all about the matter and ask for his help. Mr. White listened quietly as a man of his character always does, although Allan could see the flame of a righteous indignation glow and burn in his eyes, as he understood the situation. "Why Brother White," Allan concluded, "I could never look myself in the face again, if I stood by and permitted Boyd to cheat that poor woman out of her property. I think it a dastardly outrage."

"What do you want me to do, Elder?"

"I want you to stand by me in this thing. There may be quite a fight for all that I can tell. You have property and will be responsible. We'll hire a lawyer and fight the thing till kingdom come."

"How much do you think it will cost, Elder?"

"I do not know, Brother White, perhaps a hundred dollars."

"I'll stand by you if it costs me five hundred."

"Thank God! I've found a real man," said Allan fervently, his eyes filling. And so a council of war was held. It was agreed that the first thing necessary was to get the facts as to the width of the lots according to the county records. Mr. White had a nephew, a young attorney just beginning practice. He would ask him to investigate the matter, also the law and then they would be prepared to plan further.

For some reason there was delay; almost a week passed and the high board fence, which enclosed nothing, still darkened Mrs. Cabbitt's kitchen and dining room. Allan urged her to bear it a while longer and say nothing to anyone. He was very much mistaken if Mr. Boyd did not hear something drop real hard before long."

Then came the attorney's letter saying that he had examined the records in the office of the register of deeds and the lots were both the same width, each forty-four feet. The corner lot had no advantage over the widow's.

Both Mr. White and Allan thought it best to

be very sure of their ground and so the attorney was requested to make sure that there was no mistake as much depended upon the exact facts. This caused more delay, but again the attorney assured them that the lots were both the same width.

"Now, Elder," said Mr. White, as they talked it over, "I am not quite as quick tempered as you are, so, perhaps, I'd better show this letter to Boyd, and advise him to take down the fence." Allan agreed to this, and Mr. White soon stood in the door of Boyd's saloon, with the letter in his hand. He never entered a saloon even on business, if he could possibly avoid it.

Boyd came to the door, surprised at seeing such a visitor, but still more surprised when he read the contents of the letter. Indeed he was the most surprised man in Buxter and as Mr. White said afterwards "fell all into a heap" metaphorically speaking. He had been confident that all he needed to win the victory was to hold on and the widow would be compelled to accept his terms. He had no suspicion that Allan had

been keeping up the fight, and to find that he had secured the help of so substantial a man as Mr. White and that they had engaged a lawyer that indeed was totally unexpected.

"My advice to you, Mr. Boyd," said Mr. White, in his mild way, "is to move your fence back to the line and cut it down to the lawful height. I think, under the present circumstances, from what Jack says, that you are liable for damages."

Boyd was now as frightened as he had been surprised. He gathered himself together as best he could and hastened to say:—

"I'll do it, Mr. White, I'll 'tend to it today."

And so the battle was won. The attorney would make no charge, glad to accommodate his uncle, and the whole cost had been all of four cents for two postage stamps, which expense Allan and his friend laughingly divided between them. Boyd was as good as his word, and within only a few hours the sixteen foot fence was torn down and a much more modest one of only four feet in height put up on the right line.

Buxter could hardly believe its eyes. Mrs. Cab-

bitt had been in the right, after all; Jim Boyd had been whipped. Who would have believed it possible! A number of those who had been most insistent that Allan should attend to his own business, came around, slapped him on the shoulder and said:

"You did just right, Mr. Fairly, you did just right!" For some reason, Allan did not feel very happy over these compliments. He thanked them, of course, but in his heart he said: "Yes, but where were you when I needed you?"

Mr. Boyd no longer had a leer on his face when Allan passed his saloon, but instead there was a look of anxiety. Allan was told that for weeks, and for the first and last time in the history of Buxter, a saloon keeper actually obeyed the law. Boyd refused to sell to minors or to drunkards, closed at the lawful hour each night, forbid gambling in his saloon and kept closed tight all day Sunday. He was afraid that Mr. White and Allan would prosecute him. It may be said, too, that Mrs. Cabbitt's line fence remains to this day just forty-four feet from the

corner.

These were by no means all of the adventures which befell the enthusiast, but whether it has been worth while to tell of these, and especially whether any more shall be told, must be left to the decision of others. The reader who cares to know may be assured that, with slight changes, these adventures are true both in substance and in fact.

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